

NEWSLETTER

LEHIGH VALLEY HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATION

LE-HI-HO, P.O. Box 1003, Moravian Station, Bethlehem, Pa. 18018

March, 1975

LE-HI-HO will meet on Sunday, March 16 at 2 PM in the Unitarian Church of the Lehigh Valley, 701 Lechauweki Avenue, Bethlehem (Fountain Hill section), Pa. The church is located two blocks south of 1500 Broadway. Two films will be shown. "Holding" by Constance Beeson depicts a loving female couple and "Vir Amat" by Laird Sutton a male couple. The films show gay couples who are warm, human, and affectionate in their loving; we highly recommend them.

The University of Pennsylvania Christian Association and Gays at Penn are sponsoring a lecture series entitled "Perspectives on Gay Americans" to be held Tuesdays February 25-April 22, 8:30 PM, 3601 Locust Walk C8, Philadelphia. Merle Miller and other gay professionals will treat topics such as Gay Literature, The Christian Homosexual, The Lesbian Novel, The Psychology of Homophobia, Gays and the Media, and others.

A recent issue of Ms. Magazine included a petition for freedom of sexual choice to be sent to the U.S. Congress, State Legislatures, the White House, and other groups. It was already signed by approximately 150 prominent women across the nation, including Bella Abzug, Jill Johnston, Patricia Loud, Margaret Mead, Kate Millet, Elaine Noble, Joyce Carol Oates, Yoko Ono, Helen Reddy, Lily Tomlin, and Joanne Woodward.

"Homosexuals May Be Healthier Than Straights" is the title of an article in Psychology Today (March) by San Francisco psychologist Mark Freedman, who bases his observations on Evelyn Hooker's 1957 comparison of straight and gay males not in therapy, and on his own similar research with lesbians and straight women. In both cases no distinctions could be made in personal adjustment of the two groups, and Freedman found that in certain ways lesbians function better than straight women. He has since sought further data on the ways in which homosexuals are better off psychologically than heterosexuals. Many gays respond to social pressures by "centering", or discovering and living according to their own values, with an intense quest for identity, purpose, and meaning, often at an early age. Gays with mates quickly see the limitations of stereotyped sex roles, and their sexuality may be more varied and expressive. Those gays, Freedman says, who do not show these healthy attributes can be the ones crippled by social pressure who end up trying to fit society's ugly image of "the Homosexual" rather than pursuing any of the positive roles and patterns.

We hope you all caught ABC's recent special entitled "Homosexuals: Out of the Shadows", which was basically well done. The main contribution was its presentation of gay people as every day human beings. The fact that the gay people interviewed by David Frost were not gay lib celebrities who've appeared on every talk show, but rather unknowns helped in this aspect. A recent check on ABC's "Hot 'l Baltimore" gave us no complaints as to the treatment of the gay couple, although George and Gordon were as much idiots as any of the other characters on this dreadfully dull show.

Governor Shapp has formed a Task Force on Gay Issues. Composed of nine representatives of gay groups and representatives from various departments in the Commonwealth (Health, Welfare, Banking, Insurance, etc.), its object is to study the situation of gays in the state, isolate areas of concern, and recommend governmental action which would meet the needs of all gays. We hope individuals will write to the Governor approving of his formation of the task force and asking his vigorous support for it.